

ELECTIONEERING FOR OFFICE DEFENDED, WITH
SOME DIRECTIONS AS TO THE PROCESS.

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DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY

THOMAS CHITTENDEN, Esquire,

GOVERNOR,

THE HONORABLE COUNCIL,

AND

House of Representatives,

OF THE

STATE OF VERMONT;

AT

RUTLAND, OCTOBER 14, 1796.

By DAN KENT, *Pastor of the Church
K of Christ in Benson.*

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE LEGISLATURE, FOR
SAMUEL WILLIAMS.

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SOCIETY

THOMAS CHITTENDEN, ESQ.

FOR 1802.

THE HONORABLE COUNCIL

AND

THE BRITISH MUSEUM



STATE OF VERMONT

AT

WILLIAM O. COOPER

B. DAN KENT, PRINTER
OF CHURCH IN BURLINGTON

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE HONORABLE COUNCIL

A N
ELECTION SERMON.

LUKE xvi, 10.

*He that is faithful in that which is
 LEAST is faithful also in MUCH, and
 He that is unjust in the least is unjust
 also in much.*

IN every employment and station in life, in which God in his providence calls us to act, in order that we acquit ourselves with a dignity becoming rational and accountable creatures, faithfulness is absolutely requisite.

THE general idea of faithfulness (were it necessary to define it) implies a universal aim to discharge every incumbent duty, towards God, ourselves, and our fellow men; by a vigilant and intense

intense application of every power and faculty, with which we are endowed, to do good and communicate happiness.

AND herein is comprehended the sum of all which is required, to gain the approbation of God our Maker; and the peace and enjoyment of a good conscience.

FAITHFULNESS is the result of that willing mind, which divine inspiration informs us, *is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which a man hath not."*

DESTITUTE of this virtue which has so often been repeated, what are all the shining endowments of nature, united with the embellishments of a finished education, but to qualify the subject to invade to better advantage the rights of his fellow men?

THE greatest and most brilliant things in nature, if not applied to their proper uses, might prove the worst evils;

ils; even the sun in the firmament, should it be wanting in faithfulness, and deviate from its sphere; might, instead of warming and enlightening the world, annihilate the organs of vision, and by its intense heat, burn and devour the animal and vegetable creation.

YEA also, if we take a view of God, and for a moment consider him as destitute of this perfection; must we not consider him as an infinite evil.

FAITHFULNESS is that which render every *Divine* perfection infinitely good and amiable; it is from this, that almighty power, infinite wisdom, and knowledge, are applied to the best possible purposes.

WE might exhibit a specimen of exalted powers and faculties unfaithfully applied, by turning your attention to the conduct of fallen angels, who from the dignity of their natures are stiled principalities and powers; yet
sunk

sunk in moral depravity to the malicious employ of going about seeking whom they may devour.

BUT we are not driven to explore the regions of darkness, for instances to exemplify this truth ; too many alas ! offer themselves, from the conduct of our fellow men : Yea, where is the man, who dare wholly excuse himself, from the guilt of *debasing* his dignity, by an unfaithful application and improvement of his talents. As humiliating as this consideration is, must we not adopt the language of inspiration, *Behold all have gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good, no not one.*

BUT to pass by this general view of mankind, as it respects the universal moral depravity of their natures ; when we find them originally all on a level. If we observe them in relation to their conduct in life, we shall be convinced, that many have emerged from this common mass of impurity, and from the impulse of virtue, have risen superior

rior to others. And these are they whom we always seek after, as the objects of our confidence ; while such as instead of raising by virtue from the ruins of the apostacy, sink deeper and deeper by vice, are rejected. This was the case of a certain steward mentioned in the context, whose conduct in regard to the execution of a trust reposed in him, gave occasion for the maxim in our text to be delivered;

THUS we read *There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods ; and he called him, and said unto him, how is it that I hear this of thee ; give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest no longer be steward. Then the steward said within himself, what shall I do ? I cannot dig ; to beg I am ashamed.*

THIS example of unfaithfulness is adverted to by our blessed Lord, with a view to impress the mind with its evil consequences ; both as it respects the
betrayers

betrayers of his trust, and the credulous, who imprudently place confidence, The power committed to the steward is shamefully abused, in consequence of which, as the *harvest* of his folly, the faithless wretch is cashiered of his office, turned out of a reputable and lucrative employ, which would have afforded him an early and honorable support; and the goods of his employer wasted and consumed.

BY some means, this steward had ingratiated himself into the esteem and confidence of that unsuspicious Lord; and as we are not informed in the story what they were, we are left to conjecture. Probably by insinuating his extraordinary talents to fill that office, with profit to his employers; and with many specious proposals of amendment in the economy of his family expences, and fair promises to excel all his predecessors, in the indispensable duty of faithfulness.

BUT

BUT in whatever way his baneful art directed him, in managing the business of *his own appointment*, we find him successful, and in actual possession of an office, which involved a degree of power, that required integrity, prudence and disinterested virtue, to answer the purposes, for which it was bestowed.

BUT on trial, he proved void of all these noble and exalted sentiments; and remarkable for nothing but the practice of that intrigue, by which we have imagined he obtained his trust; --- *wife indeed to do evil*, and artful to evade punishment.

INSTEAD of regarding the interest and prosperity of his employer, and attending with diligence to the discharge of his duty, he spends his time in dissipation, and his master's money in the practices of vice and prodigality.

B

BUT

BUT alas ! for him, he is accountable ; *liable* to the common misfortune of such as are entrusted with *delegated* power.

GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF THY STEWARDSHIP——there is something AWFUL in this demand---more than a bare expression of *authority*---a *jealousy* that a *scrutiny* will disclose some *secret* guilt, ---And threatening *due* punishment in consequence.

THIS suggestion, undesignedly, brings the solemn scene of the last judgment into view ; when we must render an account of the improvement of every talent with which we have been intrusted, by the supreme Lord of the universe ; in comparison with which, the tribunals of men, are stripped of their pomp and importance.

AS a faint illustration of which, observe the unjust steward, with conscious guilt, face to face with his injured Lord : Questioned, and nothing which

will

will *extenuate*, to answer. To stand a moment in this situation, loaded with shame, fear, remorse, and every passion which must perturb a guilty mind; would more than counterbalance for all the lawless gratifications of a life, yea, for an eternity spent in the indulgence of vice and prodigality.

THE Steward now finds himself enclosed with a combination of evils. Not only deprived of his office, but with such marks of disapprobation, as to prevent his finding employ elsewhere; not only disgraced, but consigned to poverty, wretchedness and despair. Thus he communes with himself, *What shall I do? I cannot dig,---to beg I am ashamed.*

BUT expedients are handy to the artful and intriguing; such as are free from the fetters of law, principle, and conscience, have a wide field open for their escape. He soon comes to a determination to seek a refuge by bribery. While therefore

fore a bribe was in his power, he seizes the opportunity of calling every one of his Lord's creditors, and of cancelling such a part of their debts as he judged sufficient to secure a place of retreat in their houses. And here ends his story; he has now sunk beneath being an object of enquiry: And it gives some relief to the mind, after tracing a character down the stream of corruption, to see them plunge into the ocean of obscurity.

THUS we have traced the steward, till we see him divested of all power, but the most wretched one of all, that of exciting pity; and the only benefit which he will gain by this, is to be forgotten by those who have existed by his profusion.

OUR Lord observes, that notwithstanding the unjust steward was rejected for an abuse of his trust; yet his master commended his wisdom in the very action by which he suffered the loss of his property. Intimating, that
by

by the sagacity displayed by him in this intrigue, he evinced an ability of being useful, both to himself and society, had he been disposed to apply his talents for that laudable purpose.

ON which moreover, he further observes, *That the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.*

THAT is (as I conceive) there is more profound knowledge, contrivance, and invention displayed, by dishonest and designing men, in the conception of deep laid plots, and in the prosecution and accomplishment of unjust, wicked, and mischievous purposes, to enslave, cheat, and defraud mankind, than there is in the children of virtue, honesty and public spirit, in doing good, and endeavoring to build up and promote the interest and happiness of their fellow men, or than there is in the christian, in the great business of his spiritual and holy calling.

EVEN

EVEN so much outdone are the children of light, by the sons of darkness, in regard to invention, vigilance, and perseverance, that the conduct of the latter, is, in *these* respects, suggested as an *example* for the former to imitate.

BUT to proceed to the main object in view,

THE rich man having rejected his steward, the office is now vacant; and if some clue is not afforded him by which he may be better enabled to distinguish between the faithful and the unfaithful, it may as well, yea far better remain so. Not, that I would presume to detain this respectable audience, with proposals *simply* for the accommodation of a private individual: But, if we can find some universal maxim, which will relieve *his* difficulty, we may make a general application of it, in all cases, as a direction in the important article of placing confidence.

FOR

FOR a solution of this enquiry
we are led to the text.

*HE that is faithful in that which
is least, is faithful also in much; and He
that is unjust in the least, is unjust al-
so in much.*

THIS Maxim is of universal ex-
tent, and not only answers the purpose
of this private man, as a direction to
avoid a second imposition; but will af-
ford the same assistance to the citizens
of a state or a republic; in pointing
out the proper objects of confidence;
and directing to the men, to whom may
be committed the most weighty con-
cerns of government.

HE THAT IS FAITHFUL IN THAT
WHICH IS LEAST.

WHERE you find a vigilant at-
tention to the least things, a seasona-
ble, judicious, persevering discharge of
the daily incumbent duties of private
life; united with an ingenious mind,
improved

improved and cultivated by education ;
 MARK that man for a useful member
 of society ; take down his name ; and
 write in capitals under it, **THIS MAN
 WILL BE FAITHFUL IN MUCH.**

SO on the contrary, where you
 find a person unjust, dishonest, and
 negligent in the least things ; wanting
 in regard to the discharge of duties in
 private life--take his name down also,
 and let it be your MONITOR, *that this
 man will be unjust in much, and is not to
 be trusted with much.*

IF the maxim in our text is so ex-
 tensive and important ; it deserves fur-
 ther illustration, and some particular
 directions with respect to its applica-
 tion.

AND this is what I propose to do
 in further discoursing on this subject.

AND

AND III. In illustration of the maxim, it is observable ; that, the motives to rigid faithfulness in the *least* things, arising from the *good* to be obtained, or the *evil* to be avoided, cannot be very powerful. The profit on the one hand is too *trifling* to excite hope, and the loss on the other, too *small* to excite fear : whatever degree of faithfulness therefore, is observed in these things, must flow from a heart congenial with that virtue.

BUT on the contrary, in the prosecution of important enterprises, where there is much to be obtained, or lost, we may *sometimes* see extraordinary efforts of faithfulness, result simply from the passions ; yet, whatever may arise from a source so uncertain in its existence, will not justly be received, as an expression of the temper of the heart. Though a great *degree* of faithfulness may appear, on some occasions of great importance ; this, will operate no further, to establish our confidence in the agent ; than, it evinces a sacred regard to virtue.

MEN however, often suffer themselves to be imposed on, by the glare of some great action, and their confidence to be obtained, by a momentary display, of greatness or goodness, resulting wholly from the passions; while the conduct of their hero in private life, in concerns too uniform to awaken the passions, were as uniformly pusillanimous, and tinctured with a bad heart. If this suggestion needed exemplification, we might advert to a name, which should never be mentioned, but to render vice detestable. Who more faithful in great things than Arnold? and who shared more deeply in the public confidence than this man? but, two things prove their confidence ill founded, one of which, (his private character) should have prevented the impositions; the other, was but a consequence that might have been expected. The event of his betraying his country, is the first act in his public capacity, which corresponded with his private life. As soon as he awakes from his enthusiastic phrenzy, and recollects himself,---the first act is treason and treachery. TO

TO suppose passion a steady principle, is to annihilate its existence. Instability, is one of its essential properties; from this, it derives its name, and from the various forms which it assumes, the diversity of names, by which the exercises are distinguished, in relation to those forms.

THE energy of passion may be necessary to excite activity in a course of good actions, but is dangerous when united with a corrupt, malevolent heart.

WHILE the world is looking on, many great and good actions, in a political sense, may result, from emulation, pride, ambition, &c. but whatever is derived from this source is infinitely uncertain in its continuance: to confide here is to build on caprice itself.--One adverse breeze may shift the form of these passions to the malignant shape of anger, malice, and revenge; the least real or imaginary neglect, or indignity, may set them to pulling down with both hands,

hands, what they have been building up with one.

BUT in common concerns which daily occur ; men, act dispassionately, and suffer the naked sentiments of their hearts to appear. And an honest, upright, faithful heart, will not surely wound itself, by grasping after the wages of unrighteousness for a trifling sum ; but, when there is strength of virtue, sufficient to restrain, from the smallest act of oppression, and injustice, does it not imply ; that, there is a *sufficiency* to restrain from the greatest. More strength of virtue is implied, in a sacred regard to justice in the least sum, than in the greatest. If a man withdraw his hand, from taking a penny unjustly ; he will shudder at the suggestion of taking, in that way a much greater sum. So that, he that is faithful, and just, in the *least*, will, from the same degree of virtue, more evidently be so, with regard to the *greatest*.

AND

AND from the same mode of reasoning, it will appear as evident, that he who is unjust in the least, will, from the same degree of depravity, more surely be so also in much, if the gain of a penny, will tempt a man to cheat, and defraud his neighbor, does this not prove him, totally void of the *principle* of honesty. There being therefore, no virtue to resist that temptation, which must gain strength, and increase, in proportion to the sum to be obtained; he that is unjust in the least, will be unjust also in much.

2. THIS maxim, may be further illustrated, as it relates to liberty, and the rights of men. The faithful patriot, has a sacred regard to the inherent rights of his fellow men: in the same degree, as he wishes to indulge himself, or be indulged, in the universal enjoyment of his liberties, he is willing to indulge others; he feels no temptation to restrain, oppress, or tyrannize over such, as may be in his power, even in private life.

C

THEREFORE

THEREFORE where there appears a disposition to display the least degree of power wantonly, even, in the most obscure retreats of private life, a temper prevailing, to usurp authority, and infringe on the rights, and liberties of their fellow men, this despotic taste will prevail, and increase, as temptation prevails, by the addition of power and opportunity.

THAT man in private life, who is unwilling to allow his neighbor and townsmen, the free indulgence of the same degree of liberty, which he himself assumes, when on a level with them, what may be expected from him, when raised above them by being clothed with authority and power?

IF he then deviated one degree from the principle of liberty and equality, towards the path of arbitrary power, will he not now ten degrees? will not the little finger of his official sceptre be thicker than the loins of his private? and whereas he chastised his neighbors

neighbors with whips, will he not chastise his subjects with scorpions.

BUT II. To make a more close application, of the maxim in our texts, in our search for the faithful man, the disinterested patriot, to whose care we may commit the most invaluable treasures of a free people. What has been observed in this way has been with a view to illustrate the justness of the maxim to which we have been attending; but is not sufficient to distinguish between the faithful and the unfaithful.

NOTHING is more evident, than that whatever may be a man's real sentiment; patriotism may be affected; and however in heart he may be opposed, his opposition may be suppressed, and his feelings sacrificed to popular views, hopes and expectations.

THE basest, and the most contracted motives, may prevail with an ambitious and selfish man, (in a government especially, where promotion depends

depends on the voice of the people) to make an ostentatious show of patriotic principles. In profession he may venerate the doctrine of liberty and equality; and as a proof of his sincerity may contemptibly cringe, and meanly stoop, to such, as in many respects, are vastly his inferiors, than which however, nothing can be more palpably inconsistent and self-contradictory.

THE man who would avoid the infamous brand of hypocrisy, in his profession of love to the rights of men, must exhibit an unshaken regard to his own rights, and endeavor to defend them with a dignity, which becomes a son of freedom. And it will be directly to my purpose, at the same time, to concede that the rights of an individual are the least thing, when compared with national rights.---

FOR he who is unfaithful in that which is least, is unfaithful also in much; and if the rights of a nation are of great

great importance; the rights of every individual must be of some importance; therefore, such as meanly give up their common or official dignity, to subserve a selfish purpose, will be ready to renounce every thing committed to their trust on the same conditions.

THERE is a certain bound to which every ambitious man aspires,-- And the commitment of official trust, as it respects all the intermediate stages, between what he possesses and the ultimate object of his wishes; is, so far from satiating, that it only encreases the desire, to hasten with the more speed till he arrives at the apex. And if his introduction into office was the purchase of cringing, and the practising of that low art, which, needs no name or description; the same will be seen, in the discharge of every duty, which belongs to his trust, till having arrived to the *ne plus ultra* of his expectations from the people; then in proportion as he has acted the cringeing parasite, he will assume the despotic tyrant. While
FROM ascending

ascending his bearers will be complimented with a *VOX POPULI VOX DEI*, but when they have assisted him up, and he finds himself established, he will substitute for his motto *DIEU ET MON DROIT*.

IN the lowest station of private life, it becomes a man and a patriot, to shew a suitable respect to his own rights and dignity, and from such only as do this, may be expected that support of dignity, in an official character, which will render God's civil minister a terror to evil doers. If to assume a power not derived from the people be arbitrary and despotic, a neglect to maintain and support the power which is derived from them, with proper dignity, is subversive of all order and authority. If the former tends to tyranny and oppression, the latter is sure of preparing the way to anarchy and confusion. In either of these extremes there is equally an extinction of the enjoyment of the rights of a free people.

FROM

FROM these considerations it is not evident, that we must begin lower in the application of our text, if we would distinguish the faithful from the unfaithful; since men have so much to bias their external deportment in regard to liberty, while they view themselves in the rank of candidates for offices; and the temptation to act the hypocrite may be in proportion to their ambition.

LET us then come home to a man's daily conduct towards himself.

EVERY man has a duty to discharge towards himself which is capable of a more distinct definition than what has been given. Is the duty of self-government faithfully performed? Has the candidate which we are examining the command of his passions, and appetite? Are they like good subjects subordinate to reason, judgment, and a good conscience? That a man should govern himself, if it be of the least importance, is then, the first thing requisite, to give proof

proof of faithfulness in great things, agreeably to the text; and if self-government is not the least duty, this will not diminish, but must encrease the obligation.

IT was an observation of a man, whose wisdom will not be disputed, that, *He who had no rule over his spirit, was like a city broken down, and without walls.*

SUPPOSE a city in this ruinous and defenceless situation, should set up to be the capital of all the cities in the world; what could be more ridiculous than such a claim? or more properly constitute a subject of mirth than such a pretension? Would it not be the united voice of all the cities, first stop your own breaches, and repair your own walls, before you claim pre-eminence, or offer to serve us with your protection.

WHAT greater affront can be offered to a free people, than the proposal to

to be ruled by a slave? And is not he a slave who suffers his passions or his appetites to have dominion over him?

KNOW ye not (says the inspired apostle) that to whomsoever ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are.

WHAT bondage can be more degrading to man, endowed with reason, and judgment, to give him a rank above the brutal creation, than to submit to the imperious dictate of that part of himself, which is on a level with the herds of the stall. To neglect the government of ourselves, is to act against the most powerful motives to faithfulness in the least things, and he who is so in the least, will be so also in much.

THUS self government cannot be placed among the least things, only with reference to society, when the failure of an individual is a less evil than the failure of the whole body.

IN relation to our accountability to God, and the rewards and punishments of a future world, it is the first in magnitude, yea the one thing needful.

2. IS a man faithful to his family? Is he possessed of talents to govern, and a disposition to be faithful; Here then, the salutary effect will appear, his house will be the seat of order, peace, and subordination. In the narrow circle of his family, the patriot has leisure and opportunity, to display all the talents of a ruler, and pourtray the great frame of rational happiness in miniature. To the faithful discharge of which duty, he has the energetic motive of natural affection, added to that of friendship for his country.

BUT if a man cannot rule his own house, of what weight will the efficacy of his authority be to a nation or a state. And if he will not exert his powers, for the benefit and happiness of those whom God and nature has committed to his special care, will he be faithful

faithful to the common interest of his nation? Can a person give a stronger evidence of a sincere regard to the general welfare of the nation, than by a diligent attention to the government and education of his children? Is not this the grand pillar which must support a republican form of government? and the only basis on which we can depend, for the future enjoyment of those rights and liberties which have been purchased for our country at the expence of so much blood and treasure. To hand which down to succeeding generations, pure and un sullied, must be the wish of every true patriot, and his glory to reflect, that they should reap the happy fruit of his labours.

BUT is it possible that a man should feel impressed, with just sentiments of regard for the national welfare, and happiness, and at the same time *disregard* his family in these respects? it cannot be, it is logically inconsistent.

NOTHING

NOTHING can be more vague, than the profession of love to ones country if, that profession is not defined, by such a line of conduct, as tends to promote what sound reason declares to be for its interest, benefit and prosperity. The despot may make that profession as well as the republican. Men are capable of that degree of political blindness, from which they may incline to monarchy, in preference to democracy, and by endeavoring to promote which may profess to be aiming at the public welfare : And not only so, but some may be so grossly infatuated with vice and ignorance, as to prefer a state of anarchy to either ; and consistent herewith, may make the same profession in opposing all government and authority ; styling that a golden age, in which every man did that was right in his own eyes.

BUT with this last class there are but few who would not blush to be numbered ;

numbered; and were it possible for charity to extend beyond the evidence of fruit, we should rejoice to blot each name of our species from so idyllically graceful a catalogue.

BUT where then must we add the names of such as suffer the children under their care and tuition, to grow up in the unrestrained indulgence of their passions and appetites; in the total neglect of the duties of religion and morality? Yea, such as so far from restraining the juvenile ardor of lust, and crossing the natural propensity to vice and wickedness, urge on their offspring in the paths of licentiousness, by the invincible influence of parental example.

WILL a child thus bred to the practice of indulgence, make a good patriot? A faithful trusty successor to the crown of freedom? To whose care may safely be committed the glory of a free republic? Will such an one be pleased with the restraint of just laws, for the suppression of vice and immorality?

ality? As well may we expect a dove from the egg of a viper.

WILL not the rising generation, from the habit of early indulgence, regard the best system of laws as a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear?

I CONCLUDE this is a maxim which every one will concede to, that mankind are capable of the enjoyment of a free government, in no other degree than reason prevails, over the passions prejudice, and ignorance of the body of the people; but if not universally conceded to, is at least capable of clear demonstration, by a short and easily process.

SO far therefore as a man is sincere in his profession, and faithful in the practice of genuine patriotism, he will be attentive to his offspring. And not only restrain their passions, check the career of vicious and unruly desires, direct them in the paths of knowledge and

and instruction, but take early care to sow the seeds of morality and urbanity, and cherish their growth, by the application of those divine precepts, abounding with graces, which are not only capable of adorning a family circle, but of exalting a nation, and hushing a world of jarring passions to universal peace.

BUT lastly, as we cannot be more particular, let the professed patriot suffer the scrutiny of our text, as to the relation he sustains to the neighborhood and vicinity where he resides.

THE public affairs of a single town, open a field for the wider expansion of the republican virtues, than the narrow circle of a family.

THERE are no talents requisite to the government of a nation that may not only here find employ, but are frequently called into action.

THE

THE policy and public concerns of an incorporated town, is the proper field for the statesman and politician to shew himself to the people, who must compose his constituents.

HERE is a small republic, where the candidate for promotion may, without embarrassment display his superior merit, and prove his title to the prize of public confidence.

NOW then is he a friend to the equal rights of men, here it will appear, that he treats all men with regard to those rights as his equals.--- Has he the wisdom requisite for a statesman,---It will be made manifest, in prudent well-concerted measures for the public benefit, or growth and prosperity of the town. Has he a soul expanded with a noble disinterested affection for the general welfare of government? Will he be disposed to make a cheerful sacrifice of his own private interests when they come in competition? Observe the left hand figure of his

his subscriptions for public uses. Is he a magistrate of the peace and aspiring to the bench? Let him prove his pretensions to that venerable seat of God's minister, by being a terror to evil doers and the praise of them who do well. Let him shew his regard to peace, order, and justice, by a steady persevering opposition to vexatious and petty law-suits; and his veneration for law by a strict observance of those statutes especially which respect morality. Is he learned and eloquent? Let those talents be displayed: not in making excuses, but in answering the objections of the selfish and contracted. By stilling the clamour of divisions and party spirit, and by confounding the enemies of peace and order.

IF a man's weight is not perceived in these important respects, in the small scale of a town, what will it be in the great national scale? *But as the DROP of the bucket, or the SMALL DUST of the balance.*

IT is as great an imposition on the understandings of men, and as much of an affront to common sense, for a man to make a claim, to some of the most important places of trust, in government; whose talents have ever been useless in the town in which he resides; as it would be for a servant to tell his master, that his strength was of that kind that, he could lift nothing less than a ton weight, and so ought to be excused from common labour.

WHATEVER may be a man's natural or acquired abilities; if they are not applied faithfully, they are only like the talent of the slothful servant, which he took and hid in the earth; and with him ought to be consigned to contempt and ignominy.

FOR an example of what weight one man may be to the place of his residence; the instance of a FRANKLIN to the city of Philadelphia, will be a striking proof.

IN that populous city he stands alone to the view of the citizens. --- Yet lives in his wife and useful institutions. Though dead yet speaks, and will there in a special manner, be had in perpetual remembrance : And all but the result of a faithful application of his talents.

HAD he been inclined to indulge himself in sloth and negligence, it was not all that nature had done for him that would have rescued his name from oblivion.

LET his merit be proved by government of himself, and his industry to the rules of religion and morality : by making his house the seat of order, and his ministry of those virtues which are the basis of a free government.

To Conclude. THE remark of St. Paul, on the christian professor devoid of charity, may be applied to a statesman destitute of faithfulness.

THOUGH a man have a quick perception, a profound understanding and judgment ; though he have all knowledge,

knowledge; so that he can develope all the mysteries of science; and though he have the tongue of men and of angels, and can speak with the eloquence of a Cicero or a Demosthenes; yet, destitute of faithfulness in the application, *He is but a SOUNDING BRASS, and a TINKLING CYMBAL.*

HERE then, let the candidate for commissions, honors, and delegated power be tried.

LET his merit be proved by the government of himself, and his subjection to the rules of religion and morality: by making his house the seat of order, and his family a nursery of those virtues which are the basis of a free government; and the town in which he resides, the miniature of a happy republic: As to the righteous and equal distribution of civil justice, literature, and the worship of that God whose blessing is necessary to crown our best endeavors with success.

THIS

THIS is a mode of electioneering, which may be justified on republican principles; and the only one which does not depend for its success on duping the people, bribing conscience and trifling with the oath of God: Besides being strongly impregnated with the poison of despotism.

AND however sweet it may be to the taste of such as are the dupes of flattery, will prove bitter in the belly; and by slow degrees corrode the vitals of liberty, and issue in the consumption of the republican body.

I am far from seeking to suppress so ancient and laudable a practice as electioneering for preferment. All I aim at, in this discourse, is only an improvement of the plan. And if what I have suggested, is as probable a method to effect the main purpose, it certainly has in many other respects, infinitely the preference of that which has sometimes been adopted.

BY adhering to my scheme of courting favor, if the candidate should fail of success: yet the conscious merit of having served God and his generation in every sphere in which he had been called to act; would alleviate the mortification of being neglected by an ungrateful and mis-judging world.

THE reflection of having done well as far as he had opportunity, would afford a calm rational contentment here, and be an earnest of a permanent reward hereafter,——

WHEN not only the glory of this transitory state shall vanish away, but the world itself suffer a dissolution. And mankind, from the greatest potentate to the lowest peasant, be summoned to give an account of their deeds, and will receive either approbation or disapprobation, according as they have improved their talent. In relation to which solemn, splendid, and august exhibition, all the united greatness and pomp of human affairs, sink in

in the comparison, to the least things. And may be numbered among those least things which our Lord has reference to in the text : which as a trial were committed to the trust of mankind as probationers, to afford an opportunity for them to display a degree of Faithfulness, which will prove a title to those incorruptible riches and immortal honors, which will never fade away.

AND now, if I might be permitted, with due deference and respect, the liberty of addressing your EXCELLENCY, in regard to what has been observed on this occasion. The pleasing talk of congratulation, would present itself as the theme.

IT is a rare instance, where a man may be felicitated, with so many proofs of his faithfulness, as so long a continuance in an office of the first dignity affords. Especially considering the number of repeated elections, which that continuance involves each ; of which, is
not

not only an implicit acquittance, from the charge of neglect of duty; but a declaration of the majority of your constituents, that you have been found faithful.

THE testimony of thousands to this. To hear it proclaimed with so many voices; must not only be satisfactory; but the best reward which your labors can receive from men.

THIS pleasing reflection must meliorate the burden of your official trust; and encourage, and animate you, in the prosecution of all those duties, which your own honor and the welfare and the dignity of the state requires. So that if possible you might emulate your own example: and as a good steward to whom much is given; it may not be unpleasing to reflect, that much will be required.

HAVING in concurrence with the approbation of your constituents, that of a good conscience, as a comfortable prelude,

prelude, to the final acquittance and approbation of your judge. To the voice of the people may his gracious plaudit be added : in the language of this honorable eulogium ; " WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT, HAVING BEEN FAITHELL IN A FEW THINGS, I WILL MAKE THEE RULER OVER MANY THINGS, ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD.

NEXT, with the same due respect, I beg leave to address with this excellency the council and house of representatives.

YOU Sirs, now occupy the seat of the fathers of your country ; and are invested with a power, to prove yourselves worthy of that honorable appellation,

AS legislators, your rank is dignified, your trust important, and your work the exclusive employ, of the gods among the people. You are the

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stewards

stewards, not of a rich man only, but of the riches of a respectable part of the nation, of the rights and liberties of a free state.

TO waste these goods, of inestimable value; would be a crime, as much more aggravated, than that of the unjust steward, in the context; as the trust is more important, and the consequences of abuse, more extensive and pernicious.

AND if the disapprobation of a single individual, expressed in THOU MAYEST NO LONGER BE STEWARD; involved a degree of misery, and disgrace, which reduced the object of it to despair; who would be able to support, the united voice of a town or state in language of similar import; especially with the addition of a conscious conviction, of the justice of the sentence.

BUT I am far from adverting to this case, in my address to you gentlemen,

men, as a motive to a faithful discharge of your duty; that noble disinterested mind, which distinguishes the sincere patriot, needs no address to the passion of fear.

THE pleasure of discharging duty, as connected with the happiness of mankind, is a sufficient pledge for the most vigilant exertions.

AND may I not presume that each member of this honorable body, has given ample proof of possessing that spirit. And that the confidence of your constituents was gained by your faithfulness in regard to the least things.

MAY I not conclude, that you have been faithful to yourselves, and to your families in the discharge of all the duties of private life; and in the relation to the place of your residence, have, by your wisdom, prudence, and public spirit, made yourselves pillars, for the support of order, literature, morality and religion. And in this path of true wisdom,

wisdom, have ascended these seats of legislative dignity, impressed with a due reverence of that GOD whose ministers you are; and to whom (as a more rational motive to urge) you stand accountable.

HAVING in the least things been faithful, you have given a sure pledge of being so in much.

FROM such an assembly, what might be too sanguine to hope for or anticipate? Vice on these blessed premises would hide its detestable head, evil doers would be seized with terror and dismay, virtue would exult in victory, and religion smile in a protector.

IN an assembly like this, the cause of christianity would find a nursing father, and its enemies an awful adversary, "*justice and judgment, would run down our streets like a river, and righteousness as an overflowing flood.*" And when death should dissolve their connection with a general assembly on earth, they should

should arise in triumph, to join the general assembly, and church of the first born, in realms of substantial and unfading glory.

ALL *this* you have power to do, both to yourselves and your country, and shall we not hope for ALL THIS, since neither powerful motives nor brilliant examples can be wanting?

NOTHING but UNFAITHFULNESS can blast our hopes and expectations. The power of FAITHFULNESS is invincible, it has never been overcome.

May you, by a faithful discharge of duty have your names inserted in the catalogue of the faithful; *Who have subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopt the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, and finally participate of their blessed reward.*

FINALLY

FINALLY one word to the audience will conclude.

OUR text and subject calls on each individual to reflect on his own station and rank in life, and teaches us all, that wherever we find ourselves to be more engaged to be useful than, than to rise to a higher rank and a more dignified employ,

THE affairs of human life open an immense field, for the display of patriotism and benevolence. But such as are roving for employ in this field, and can hesitate where to begin their labor, carry with them the brand of sloth and unfaithfulness.

MY fellow citizens, MARK THE FAITHFUL MAN, AND BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT. It is such that should be honored by Men.

FINALLY

AND

AND it is such *only* who will be honored by him who alone sways the sceptre of the universe, TO WHOM BE GLORY FOREVER, AMEN.

AND it is such only who will be
honored by him who alone ways the
scripture of the universe, to whom
STATE OF VERMONT.

In General Assembly, October 14th,
1796.

RESOLVED,

THAT Samuel Lathrop, Esq. Gene-
ral Israel Morey, and Chauncy
Smith, Esquire, be a committee to wait
on the Rev. Dan Kent, return him the
thanks of this house for the sermon by him
delivered on Election Day, and request a
copy for the press.

Extract from the Journals.

Attest,

RICHARD WHITNEY, Clerk.

